1: Nimuendajú 'E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS

his presentation always involving the gift of a gourd bowl of food or of a meat pie. At various other ceremonies the chiefs and elders also get meat pies and other victuals in the plaza.

At the close of the pepyé retreat in 1933 I witnessed a ceremony that publicly and formally expressed the principle that old women merit respect as much as old men. Ordinarily there is no feminine counterpart to the men's council in the plaza; but on that day the old women were invited by the councilors to take the male elders' places in the plaza, the councilors themselves withdrawing to a spot on the margin. Then two youths and a girl hauled in a huge meat pie on a mat and handed it over to the old women, who forthwith divided it up and ate it precisely in the manner of the councilors, whereupon they went home.

Among the Timbira the designation "old woman" or "woman" is never applied to men vituperatively.

BURIAL

As stated previously, a Canella, whenever possible, tries to die in his matrilineal home. In 1929 I saw relatives of a very old, sick woman exerting themselves to the utmost in order to get her home alive—an end accomplished only by dashing across the steppe with the patient, who was resting in a makeshift hammock. Several minutes after her arrival she died. In any case a corpse is never laid on a bier except in the maternal home.

A dying person is placed on mats in the middle of the house, with his feet toward the door. Except in the case of a prominent figure in the community no one but the next of kin customarily assembles around the patient. A brief lament uttered by his mother, aunt, grandmother, or sister announces his passing away. Thereupon his maternal and paternal kin, as well as his hąpín, assemble in the house of mourning, but the general lament by all present does not begin until about an hour later, with the preparation of the corpse, during which all sit round it on mats placed in juxtaposition.

The ablutions and ornamentation devolve on the deceased individual's special pinčwę'i or hąpín, but other hąpín also help. They cut his hair, pluck out his eyebrows, smooth his features, and put on his decorations. He is painted with urucú or—if a hąmrén—decorated with falcon down. The corpses of little children are taken into the nearest relatives' laps (including males) and bewailed. Individual lamentations now begin to swell into a chorus of blubbering and a loud, rapid, monotonous chant: "When you were still alive, I was very fond of you, but now I do not want you any more! Don't return here!" The widow and kinswomen of the deceased may weep themselves into a paroxysm of despair and attempt suicide, especially as the corpse is being carried outdoors. Suddenly seizing a tool or firebrand, the mourner may strike herself a terrific blow over the head or back. Or she may run into the space in front of the house and, precisely like her Guaraní and Apinayé sisters,[88] take a header (kamdočép) against the hard ground, possibly breaking her neck. Many years ago a mother, seeing her dead child carried away, is said to have run into the steppe and hanged herself there. Men never commit suicide on this occasion, and generally only the maternal uncle and grandfather are conspicuous in lamentation.

At Konkré's little son's funeral I noted the order in which relatives sat round the corpse: Konkré was at the head, his mother Yątkré and her sister Kentapí at the feet, his wife and one of her sisters on the right side, his mother-in-law and another sister-in-law on the left. A little to one side was seated his father-in-law,

[88] Nimuendajú, The Apinayé, 151.